

# VIA PACIS

Vol. 11 No. 1

December - January



FRITZ EICHENBERG © 1950

NATIVITY 1950



# Thank You

We surely have a lot to be thankful for this year. Kindred Community was most recently blessed with a new house from the Rufus Jones Land Trust. The house is a huge nine bedroom home in good condition. Kindred will be moving its men's shelter (now housing nearly 40 men nightly, many of them on the floor) to the "Big House". The house is located at 1535 11th Street and will open Christmas Day. Still needed are volunteers for minor repairs and painting but there is no structural work to be done. This spacious new house will greatly improve the situation of Kindred's "family" since it is almost twice the size of the 6th Avenue House.

Equally exciting is the progress of the "American Refugee" program--now called P.A.T.C.H. (Parish Apartments: Temporary Care for the Homeless). Sid Drumheller of the Coalition for the Homeless has singlehandedly developed this program for sheltering and assisting homeless families in church-sponsored apartments. Special thanks to him and to Pius X, Holy Trinity and Covenant Presbyterian, all of which have rented apartments and are working with families through this program.

Special thanks also to our faithful suppliers of food for the house and the Free Food Store--especially Grocery Thrift Store, Sbrocco's, Prairie Farm Dairy, Tait's Super Valu, Normandy Terrace Hy Vee, Down's Super Valu and Park Avenue Super Valu. Many thanks to Al and Mary Razor, who make weekly late night runs from the Huxley Bakery



The picture was taken at the Thanksgiving "Turkey Giveaway". Over 100 turkeys were distributed.

bringing the fresh bread which is the mainstay of the food store, to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Parish for their monthly collection of canned goods and cleaning supplies, to Dennis McLaughlin, who brought garden produce all summer, and to the anonymous women who for more than a year been our mainstay for meat, eggs and fruit. Speaking for the food store, thanks to Bobby Tapp who has volunteered there since we opened and who helped us out in a thousand other ways around the houses.

We appreciate all of you, too numerous to count, who have brought in food, clothing and blankets all year, often without even leaving your names. We also want to thank Faith Lutheran, Covenant Presbyterian, Pius X, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart, the Community of the Humility of Mary, the Howard's, and the parishes of the Leon Region for providing supper at the house every month. It's a welcome break from our cooking!

At this writing the Great Turkey Giveaway has not yet happened, but with two freezers packed full, a fistful of money and three days to go, we predict that our project to give out turkeys at the food store so families can have Thanksgiving in their homes will be a success. Thanks to all of you who brought turkeys and especially to Covenant Presbyterian, Des Moines Valley Friends, Faith Lutheran, Grace United Methodist, St. Mary of Nazareth and Union Park Presbyterian for making this a group project.

Finally, thanks to all the guests who have made this a happy home. You teach us, you put up with us, you keep our spirits up and (on a mundane plane) you keep the house clean (sometimes), help fix the food and run the food store. Thanks for all your support!

## The Pacifism of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker

BY CARMEN TROTTA

Throughout her life Dorothy Day was variously classified (tarred, labeled, revered) as a communist, an anarchist, a pacifist, a personalist, etc. Amidst such confusion, she mentioned that she preferred to be called, simply, a Catholic. For many, I'd imagine, this could only add fuel to the fury. So be it. If Dorothy was being enigmatic, she did so for a reason. She was calling upon others to examine, not her, but her faith, the faith of Christianity, and in so doing to examine their own faith. For her positions were nothing but a logical extension of that faith. But more, she threw down the gauntlet, she called herself "orthodox." And what of the "just war"? She cast it aside as insane and inhuman,

as Ghandi did with the caste system, as Christ did the law.

So, to take up the gauntlet, questions arise. What generated the pacifism of Dorothy Day; held it firm in the wake of Hitlerite Germany? Why is such "orthodoxy" so rarely practiced by the churches? Then, what does this example have to offer the present day peace community.

To begin with, I have come upon three reasons for our pacifism. It must be said, however, that to delineate them is to produce a synthetic abstraction. For in reality, in the person, they are contingent upon one another, interdependent, a symbiotic whole--the mind, the heart and the soul.

From the mind then, we get a rational argument. History

proves that humankind is incapable of setting up and maintaining a truly just social system. That no war, despite the urgent promises of kings and colonels, will produce a lasting peace. Thus, as Mel Phiel notes in his history of the Catholic Worker, Breaking Bread, "Day's lessons in the moral failings of even righteous causes contributed to her development as an ethical rather than a political radical, one who would not look for complete virtue in any class, cause or institution, no matter how appealing." In a similar vein Robert Ludlow writes in the Catholic Worker, "We ask the

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Needs

**MONEY** for utilities on our three houses  
**STURDY** vacuum cleaner (or someone who can repair ones we have)  
 Snow shovels  
 Salt or Sand  
**COFFEE**  
 Dish Soap  
 Laundry detergent  
 Shampoo  
 Soap  
 Toothpaste  
 Pampers  
 Sanitary Napkins  
 Toilet paper  
**HEAVY DUTY** Trash bags  
 Blankets  
 Eggs  
 Meat

Please try to set up a produce pickup with the produce manager of your local supermarket. We will rescue blemished produce and give it out at the Free Food Store. Most supermarkets discard at least three cases of produce daily and many hate to see it go to waste but don't know who we are. Please give it a try!



## Mass Schedule

We have Mass every Friday night at 7:30. Come join us in our celebration! It's a great way to visit the Catholic Worker.

## Community

Wendy Bobbitt  
 Catherine Lin Bobbitt  
 Luke Bobbitt  
 Kari Fisher  
 Jim Harrington  
 Donna Henderson  
 Patti McKee  
 Judith Reeh  
 Norman Searah  
 Carmen Trotta  
 Marla Wells

## VIA PACIS

VIA PACIS is published every two months by the Des Moines Catholic Worker, P.O. Box 4551, Des Moines, Iowa (50306). Telephone (515) 243-0765 or 243-7471. We maintain Lazarus Hospitality House, 1317 8th Street, a temporary shelter for women, couples, and families; Corrie House, 1318 7th Street, a longterm shelter for single men, and Monsignor Ligutti Library and Peace and Justice Center, 1301 8th Street.



## NONVIOLENCE: Creating Personal & Political Power

NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON  
NONVIOLENCE

The Summer Solstice  
June 19-23, 1987

The Black Hills  
South Dakota



Contact: National Conference on Nonviolence  
802 11th Avenue  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605)688-4518

### We Are Seeking

- people who are already committed to nonviolence.
- a multiracial, multicultural, multi-national, and multigenerational constituency.
- representation from a wide variety of nonviolent models, groups, and activities.

### Goals

- To identify violence.
- To empower people with skills for carrying on the work of nonviolent change.
- To engage in active listening, and to share our diverse stories, joys, and struggles in nonviolent peace-making.
- To explore nonviolence in a multi-cultural, multiracial, and multinational world.
- To accompany each other in creating nonviolent political and economic alternatives.
- To deepen the spiritual power of nonviolence in people's lives.
- To realize nonviolence as a method and as a way of life.
- To locally express the value of our global interdependency.
- To develop strategies for local, regional, and national mobilization.
- To encourage the work of nonviolence by nurturing and rejuvenating individuals and groups.

**MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO COME!!**

Contact: National Conference on Nonviolence,  
802 11th Avenue  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605)688-4518

### Participation

Come join in the joys and struggles of growing together. You can participate by:

- Registering for the conference (materials will be available in early 1987)
- Sponsoring the conference with a personal donation \$
- Sponsoring a participant in financial need (This is a crucial aspect for enabling a multiracial and multicultural gathering) \$
- Getting your group to sponsor the conference-minimum donation \$25
- Committing yourself to serve in the ongoing planning and facilitation of the conference.
- Offering skills for a specific workshop or spiritual discipline
- Offering talents to the community (e.g., music, dance, art, poetry, storytelling, drama, etc.)
- Sharing this information with others in meetings, newsletters, bulletins, etc.

### Information

**What:** National Conference on Nonviolence  
**When:** From Friday Evening - June 19 through Tuesday Afternoon - June 23 (The Summer Solstice is June 21)  
**Where:** The Black Hills of South Dakota. This area is home to both Ellsworth Air Force Base (the largest land-based nuclear weapons facility in the world) and the Paha Sapa (the sacred land of the Lakota Sioux).  
**Cost:** Sliding Registration Fee: \$5-50 (Pay according to ability)  
 Room and Board: About \$80 (Financial aid is anticipated)

Why will thousands of peace & justice activists travel to Cape Canaveral, Florida, January 17?



**CANCEL THE  
COUNTDOWN**

- (a) to go to the beach
- (b) to protest and cancel the first test of the Trident II missile
- (c) to stop Star Wars development
- (d) to end nuclear warhead and flight testing as the first steps toward total abolition
- (e) all of the above

Join thousands of Americans at the Pentagon's foremost missile and Star Wars testing facility

### National Demonstration and Nonviolent Actions

Cape Canaveral, Florida  
January 17, 1987  
(Martin Luther King Weekend)

**NATIONAL  
mobilization  
FOR SURVIVAL**

853 Broadway, #418, NY, NY 10003 212-533-0008





# Testimony

BY JIM HARRINGTON

Editor's Note: the following is Jim Harrington's testimony before a legislative interim committee on housing, utilities and homelessness.

It is no mystery as to why there are homeless families in Iowa. Last week a woman and her five-year-old son who have been homeless in the past, stopped in at the Catholic Worker House to visit. She is on A.F.D.C. now and receives a grant of \$322 for herself and her son.

Her rent which includes utilities is \$285 per month so she has \$37 left for food, clothing, transportation, household items, etc. Someone wiser than I will have to tell her how she should manage that \$37. Sooner or later, it won't be enough, their rent will not be paid and they will once again be homeless.

There are 40,000 A.F.D.C. families in Iowa, the bulk of whom live in that kind of day-to-day jeopardy. The mystery is not that we have homeless families; the mystery is why we don't have many more than we do.

I realize that the legislators must deal in aggregate figures piecing together a state budget covering a multiplicity of large programs, but I would like you to consider the impact of some recent legislative decisions on a typical A.F.D.C. family.

In October of 1984, an A.F.D.C. family of four re-

ceived a maximum grant of \$419. This would be the grant amount if there was no other income. The federal rate of participation then was 55% which meant that the federal government contributed \$230 and the state \$189 to that family.

In October of 1985, after a period of nearly seven years of no increments in the benefits to that family, the legislature gave an increase bringing their grant to \$443. However, at the same time, because of Iowa's worsening economy, the rate of federal participation increased from 55% to 58.9%. In other words, the feds paid \$261 to that family while the state's contribution reduced to \$182. This was a reduction of \$7 per month support by the state to that family from the previous year.

Now as of October 1986, the total grant remains a \$443, but the rate of federal participation has increased to 60.4%. Translated into dollars, the state now contributes \$175 per month to that family which is \$7 less than last year and \$14 less than two years ago.

Next October, the federal rate of participation is scheduled to go to 62.75%. If the grant remains at \$443 for a family of four, it will be composed of \$278 in federal funds and \$165 in state funds. Then the amount of the state's contribution of this family of four will be \$24 per month less than it was in 1984.

Now, everyone is interested in the state saving money. We are aware of the need to find money for economic development, salary increments for public school teachers, university faculty, etc., but

these needs cannot be met at the expense of Iowa's poorest families.

First of all, every time the state takes one dollar of support from an A.F.D.C. family, that family pays a cost of over \$2.50 because of the added loss of federal support. If Iowa maintains the status quo, the \$24 it will "save" on a family of four by next October will mean a cost to that family of \$65 per month.

We do not ask that Iowa taxpayers spend more on A.F.D.C. families. We ask only that the legislature return to the 1984 level of contribution when it began diverting state funds. If the state would again contribute an amount of \$189 for a family of four, the favorable federal rate of participation expected next October would result in a combined grant of \$508 compared to the present level of \$443.

We ask only that the state gives back what it has taken away for helping Iowa's poorest families.

Along the same line, there is a federally assisted emergency assistance program that Iowa has chosen not to participate in. The essence of this program is, that once in a 12 month period, an A.F.D.C. family facing an emergency such as eviction, utility shut-off, furnace repair, etc. can receive a supplemental grant to meet that crisis. The rate of participation is the same for the regular A.F.D.C. program. In other words, for every dollar the state puts in, the federal government contributes \$1.50.

Since the state does not participate, A.F.D.C. families in a crisis situation must turn to county relief programs, all of which are financed 100% by property taxes. County relief directors report that 50-75% of their relief expenditures go to A.F.D.C. emergency situations that could be covered by the federally assisted program, if Iowa participated.

At a time when the legislature is concerned with property tax relief and getting back some of the tax dollars that Iowa pays into the federal treasury, it makes no sense for the state to continue to opt out of participation in the federal program. For every dollar the state would spend, it would save the county \$2.50 for dealing with crisis situations.

Forget the humanitarian aspect. If the state continues to dump these problems on the counties, it is economically dumb.

Alone such a view might fall prey to many more doubts: "What is this commitment to eternity, a 'lasting peace'? Your life has no bearing on that in any case. Revolt with us against our imperialist overlords. If successful, at least we become masters over

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Communists once again that they pause to reconsider the events of the past, the history of violence, the mockery the state has made of any attempt at unity with all men." This view not only holds that the rhetoric of the kings and colonels is duplicity, a cover for imperialistic intent, but that even were such rhetoric sincere, it is mistaken. The new society will solidify into

caste, class: domesticated violence.

But these are humble beginnings on the road to Christian pacifism. This could be called a doubting Thomas pacifism. As he could not accept Christ until he touched his resurrected body, some cannot accept his preaching, his gospel, until they realize the utter futility of power politics, humanity's quest to set up a just social system prior to its self-purification.



# Norman's Whereabouts

In the last issue, I said something like Frank Cordaro, his mother and I slept at the Catholic Worker in Milwaukee. I'm sorry, what I should have said was we slept at a cooperative, where volunteers live and share alot of work around the cooperative.

I also didn't say anything about me getting six months suspended sentence and a year's probation. For what? For crossing the line at S.A.C. Air Force Base. I want to share the reason why with my mother and family and with you who are reading. When I was young one of my favorite hobbies was building models. While some of the boys I knew were building car models, I and a couple of other friends were building tanks, jeeps, battleships, airplanes, etc. and etc.. While building these models I got into learning what role they play in the history of warfare and how the change from a simple bi-plane to a complicated jet fighter came about. Sometimes I even learned how many lives were lost in a single plane, ship or whatever. For example a B-17 carried ten men, but today a B-52 bomber carries only half that number a big difference. What I'm trying to say is that as much as tanks, ships and planes change, so

has the bombs they drop and what they can do. For example, atom bombs that are now the warheads on the MX's are over one hundred times stronger than the two bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki which means to me that it would take one of the bombs of today to destroy a city like Los Angeles. To me, it's time to stop building bombs and war toys when there is no need for wars. So many innocent people have died, people like yourself who want to live a right old age and want to see their own grandchildren live too.

Do you realize that most of my younger years were somewhat spent hating the Russians. Yet for what? In our history books we learned that the Russians were our best friends. During the Second World War and like over night when the bomb was dropped, instant hate and the so-called arms race begins. It seems like everyone remembers World War II, but what about those little things that weren't called wars? Sometimes I feel like all these small wars are part of a chess game or some silly game of who gets the most.

Mom, the arms race that our country and Russia are so deeply involved in to me is like two people in a dark room

with their guns pointed at each other and I'm in the middle and the only thing I can do is to speak out to one of them while the other might be listening. So this and other reasons are why I crossed the line.

I believe it is important that now today, this very moment, that we look at this world we live in. No matter if we believe in God or whatever and not think of ourselves and profit which can pass, but on what we are doing to this world, to our drinking water, our air, our land, land where our food comes from and where other forms of life live and grow.

We must also allow other people in other countries to live and grow. We must learn to share this world with them, no matter where they may be from. Believe it or not, we are part of them, as much as our mother, fathers and friends are a part of us.

When we send weapons to other countries that are struggling for human rights, by a government that profits from all the harm it does to its people. Instead of letting the people and their own government fight, by sending weapons to help one side which might be bad, we have hurt a part of us which we will never know. Just as much as I will never know about the Russians who I was taught to hate.

There is a weapon which the world and even our government doesn't use, it's a good weapon. If used right its results are unbelievable. I'm speaking of love and it's a shame we do not force our government to use it.

It is with love that I cross that line at S.A.C. and I want you to know Mom, family and reader, whoever you maybe that I love you and this world that we live in, even though it's falling apart, and I love God.

Thank you,  
Norman Searah



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## Reflections From the Living Room

I regret to say, this will be the last Via Pacis I will be editing. I will be leaving for Washington, D.C. in January to work with the Christic Institute. The Christic Institute is an ecumenical, non-profit law firm specializing in controversial cases. I will be working with the Institute on the litigation against the Contras for their bombing of Pastora's press conference which injured an American journalist.

The Institute is most commonly known for its work on

the Karen Silkwood case and the civil trial for the Greensboro individuals injured and killed by the Nazi Party members. The Institute, as an organization, has represented many others as well. It is an organization that pays every individual the same amount and provides a loosely bound community for those who chose to live in its quarters.

I do not particularly want to leave Des Moines or the Catholic Worker Community, but I believe that in these times evil reigns. I was asked by the Institute if I would like to join them to assist them in what they have termed "Contra-

gate". I want to do what others feel they cannot do. This is a dramatic demonstration of the feeling of being called.

My experiences at the Des Moines Catholic Worker will always be special to me. I have enjoyed being a member of the community and being welcomed by so many "friends of the House." I hope to see many of you before I leave. Please do stop by if I do not have the opportunity to see you in this all too short month.

Peace and love,

Donna Jean



our own destiny and surely we would not exploit one another as they exploit us." Or simply, "O.K., things here may not be perfect, but if Hitler comes to power, or the Russians take over . . ."

To continue the Thomas parallel, I look to Jesus' response: Blessed are those who do not know of my ultimate triumph, the practicality or expediency of my way but who simply love and honor the beauty that is human life. A love given not only to those who love you, but to all of humanity, friend and foe, family and foreigner. A love with no ulterior motive, no master plan. A love which is natural, unconscious of itself. "When you do good, the right hand should not know what the left is doing."



The Christian who doesn't wish to live a commitment of solidarity with the poor isn't worthy to call him or herself a Christian.

Oscar Romero

This then might be called the hearts reason for pacifism. A visceral recognition of the human as brother, sister, intimate. It negates the cultural or state sanctioned view of the other as nigger, alien, enemy. It is, no doubt, the central tenet of Christianity. Again Christ's response to Thomas, "blessed are those who have never seen, heard, confessed me as their Lord, and yet have found faith." For faith is nothing but a trust in the rightness of human love. It does not need Christ, despite the false claims of misguided evangelists. Those who force, not Christ, but the ape of Christ, an idol, upon others--on pain of eternal fire. Any claim to faith without this is hateful to God. Thus Amos: "I hate, I spurn you pilgrim feasts . . . spare me the sound of your songs . . . Let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."



That Dorothy experienced this paroxysm of the heart is unquestionable. It is the message of her life, a triumph over the "Long Loneliness", a sense of alienation, a separateness of from other human beings. She confronts this, and commends the choice to the world. She writes:

I felt the spell of the long loneliness descend on me. In all that great city of seven millions, I found no friends; I had no work; I was separated from my fellows. Silence in the midst of the city noises oppressed me . . . And yet . . . I wanted to go and live among these surroundings; in some mysterious way I felt that I would never be freed from this burden of loneliness and sorrow unless I did.

She moved into the ghettos, kissed a foul-mouthed prostitute. The legend that prefaces her autobiography commends the confrontation--for "whensoever it is happy success will follow . . . the pain is great, but very endurable, because He who lays down the burden also carries it."



Dorothy Day

1897-1980

Her vision dovetails with that of her friend Thomas Merton. Merton too confronted and embraced human alienation on a crowded city street: "In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. . . . As if the sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me, now I realize what we all are. And if only everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun. . . . If only they could all see themselves as they really are . . . There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed . . . I suppose the big problem would be that we would fall down and worship one another."



The final justification for pacifism is, of course, closely related to the above. It is a belief, trust, or faith in the efficacy of love/truth. That not only is love natural and right, but in so being it meshes, reaffirms, renews God's good creation. That love felt and practiced takes on an ecological rightness, enhances the tenuous web of life that barely covers the globe. That any other action is neutral or destructive of this web. Dorothy Day likened this process to the concentric waves set off by a tiny pebble dropped into a pond. Jesus affirmed this spiritual force (Ghandi's "truth force") when he argued that the two cents in alms sacrificed by the poor woman was of greater benefit to the poor than the large sums given by the Pharisees.

So this is ours to do: seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all will be added or as Ghandi put it "The truth has a power all its own; don't get in its way." Don't force history, just do truth.

As mentioned earlier, these disparate truths lace nicely together. Dorothy claimed it all as orthodoxy. But by whose authority did she speak? She had been granted neither a halo nor an imprimatur. But then again, by whose authority was the baptism of John?

So the question lingers: How could orthodoxy be so marginally held within the churches? A brief look at the history of the early church is, I think, illuminating in this regard. I must confess to being only scantily read in this area. Still, I chance to suggest that the pacifism of the early church was primarily of the doubting Thomas variety. Among the most prominent spokespersons of the church I have not found one who completely embraces the pacifism of Dorothy Day. Progressively, as we approach the reign of Constantine, the language of these leaders becomes increasingly schizophrenic regarding the state; and eventually the church literally splits its personality.

It must be mentioned that the churches attitude towards warfare at this time is part of its more general attitude towards the state and pagan society as a whole. Simply Satan was the prince of this world and Christians were called to be in the world but not of it. Thus Christians not only refused to take part in war, they refused governmental office, they refused to use the court system, they are forbidden to attend the gladiator show or criminal execu-



# CW POSITIONS EXPLAINED

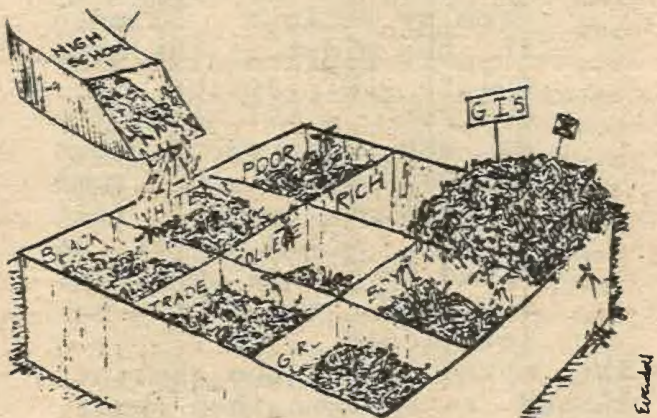
BY RICHARD CLEAVER

I spent the last installment of this series talking about how we set up for ourselves and for others barriers to seeing each other as whole people. We must rediscover our variety and richness of character and work out a way of letting that variety and those contradictions work together in our personalities.

What goes for individuals goes for society as well. The Second Vatican Council taught us that the role of the church is to "humanize" the world. We cannot do that without being human ourselves. But we don't need to put off our work in the world till we have become "truly integrated" (as current psychological jargon puts it). The same road leads us to both goals at the same time.

I remarked last time that the quest for wholeness is not rugged individualism but community-building and servanthood to all. We are not isolated individuals but members of the human species. The Council said: "by their innermost nature human beings are social beings, and unless they relate themselves to others they can neither live nor develop their potential. And as long as we live as servants we have knocked out the two props that support the injustice of our social relationships: dominance and submission.

other. It is only a step from the best film of 1982 to best language best religion, best culture--best nation, best army, best bomb. And there is a danger that the best bomb will soon be the last bomb.



White over black, male over female, adult over child, young over old, English over Spanish or French, straight over gay, rich over poor, Catholic over Protestant over Jew over Muslim over Hindu and on down the line: we make judgments like these all the time. Whenever any group has power it enforces these judgments, whether legally or through more subtle means. And all too often the goal of the oppressed is merely to get to the top, to reverse the previous state of affairs. This may be moderated with the language of rights, but rights are still something we use to protect our status rather than bringing wholeness and unity to society.

This ordering of society from top to bottom is maintained and strengthened by our passion for dividing and classifying people. We set up categories and expect everyone we meet to fit one or another of them. These categories may be class or race or religion or sex roles, but they all prevent us from seeing each other as fully human. To be different in our society, no matter what the difference, is to be an outcast. After all, our industrial method of production requires that not only the pieces that go into the machine, but the people who run the machine, be interchangeable.

The sense of differentness is kept fresh by our constant competition; even those who equate Darwin with the devil accept his disciples' preaching that "survival of the fittest" is the basic commandment in social life. Who is aware these days that Peter Kropotkin in Mutual Aid showed that throughout history sociability and cooperation have been at least as important as competition in the survival of the species? The "law of each against all" is now the destructive first rule of industrial society--each man a-

gainst his brother (I use the male terms deliberately), "the battle of the sexes", the arms race. No doubt one reason male homosexuality is so feared and loathed in industrial countries, capitalist or Marxist-Leninist, is because it raises the specter of men loving and working together rather than competing.

This situation has long been used by those in power to maintain their dominance. "Divide and rule" was used by the British to conquer India. It is used by the robber barons of the U.S. to keep workers from organizing. It is used in prisons to keep inmates from demanding decent treatment and in politics to keep interest groups from seeing connections between issues and thus making a common cause.



Pope John Paul II described the situation this way in his second encyclical Dives in Misericordia: "The desire to annihilate the enemy, limit his freedom or even force him into total dependence becomes the fundamental motive for action; and this contrasts with the essence of justice, which by nature tends to establish equality and harmony between the parties in the conflict."

The conflict may take different forms in different situations, and different approaches are necessary. It is impossible to prescribe for all cases. In keeping with the teaching just cited, though, we can see that if a method "tends to establish equality and harmony" it is probably just.

One means that is fashionable now but is not just is class warfare. Obviously this is merely adopting the unjust means of the oppressor--and in the end becoming the oppressor. It promises a "quick fix" and an outlet for frustration, but no lasting justice in society. It goes against the Council's teaching that "every group must take into account the needs and legitimate aspirations of every other

A 3D block letter illustration of the words "though" and "words". The letters are thick and blocky, with a perspective that makes them appear to float above the page. The word "though" is positioned above the word "words". The letters are drawn with black outlines and some internal shading to give them a three-dimensional appearance. The background is a light, textured surface.

We are so used to basing our social life on these two principles that we think of them as not only being right but being natural. It has infiltrated every aspect of how we look at the world around us. Better, stronger, higher, more advanced, more up-to-date, more expensive: these are words of praise we never question. Utter them, the discussion ends. We make lists of ten best this and ten most that. The Guinness Book of World Records is a best-seller (that word again!). In many cases this seems harmless enough. But it spills into the way we behave toward each



# 4: SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

group, and still more the human family as a whole."

We must be careful not to imply that class warfare is not a reality of life. Dorothy Day used to remind us that our guests were for the most part "victims in the class war"; but she also taught that adopting class warfare ourselves is no different than taking up arms in a "patriotic" cause. It merely escalates the war, and we have seen that such a course never brings peace any nearer.

Dorothy instead reminded us that the Christian response is to suffer wrong rather than to inflict it. Peter Maurin put it neatly when he said we should be "go-givers, not go-getters." He was restating Christ's teaching that the one who would be greatest among his disciples must be servant to all. The collect for peace at Morning Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer is directed to God "the author of peace and lover of concord . . . whose service is perfect freedom." Servanthood is indeed freedom, freedom from arbitrary roles, freedom from the system that demands we rise on the backs of our sisters and brothers. It is the cross, but it is also the resurrection. It is giving, but St. Francis reminds us that "it is in giving that we receive."

The suggestion that freedom can come from taking up the role of servanthood will no doubt sound like telling the oppressed to keep their place. But service is not passivity, it is active love. Willing service to the "least of my brothers and sisters" is not slavery to the rich; it is building up the whole society. By all means we must work for liberation--but through solidarity, solidarity with everyone. This removes the power of the oppressor to oppress, since that fear is based on fear of harm to ourselves. Give freely what is required of you, and more, and how can you be robbed?



This seems like weakness in our competitive world--and so it is. But St. Paul reminds us that in weakness is our strength, in the folly of the cross is wisdom. That wisdom has its place in this world. It is our weakness that disarms our enemies. And what is more necessary as a first step, than to replace division and hopelessness with solidarity and hope? How is any revolution to achieve justice without the willing service of all the people and how are the people to learn to work for justice if warfare, however rooted in "class justice" (as if justice could be anything but universal!) is all they know or are allowed to know? Willing service, love in action, is more powerful than any weapon because it is more disarming than any threat. Pope John Paul II calls it mercy and says, "True mercy is the most profound source of justice." And, he says, mercy, "is manifested in its true and proper aspect when it restores to value, promotes and draws good from all the forms of evil existing in the world and in human beings." Mercy makes no enemies and so, attracting no revenge, founds a lasting revolution.

This revolutionary theory, of course, is rooted in spiritual values. It is bathed in the mysteries of faith. Its source is the Most Holy Trinity, "that inscrutable unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit," in John Paul's words, "in which love, containing justice, sets in motion mercy, which in turn reveals the perfection of justice." It depends on the vision of society not as a machine for producing goods, but as the Mystical Body of Christ. If we fall into the error of economism, the division and competition I described earlier is quite functional. We do not need to consider the nature of work we give to people, because prosperity is worth any amount of mental illness resulting from equating a person with his or her productivity or from ignoring the need of each human being to be creative. If mental illness is too serious for the worker to continue, no matter, the workers are interchangeable, we'll get another. The same goes, of course, for physical breakdowns due to accidents, industrial poisoning, inadequate clothing or starvation.

But if we see society as an organism, as the body of Christ, the illness of any part affects the whole, and injustice done to any part is injustice to all. So it is to the advantage of all to foster

human creativity and wholeness, to let work be a celebration of humanity, to share, "to laugh with those who laugh and to weep with those who weep" because as Vatican II taught, "in his fatherly care for all of us, God desired that all human beings form one family."

An impossible, visionary picture, you cry. Naturally, it can never be achieved without grace and personal preparation. But Peter Maurin has given us a training program which not only builds for the future but allows glimpses of the Kingdom to the present. Peter's "rule" for the CW is "the daily practice of the works of mercy." The corporal works of mercy of feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, ransoming the captive and burying the dead. The spiritual works of



mercy are instructing the ignorant, counselling the doubtful, comforting the sorrowful, admonishing sinners, forgiving injuries, bearing wrongs patiently, and praying for the living and the dead. Each of us does some of these better and some less well; each has one he or she is incapable of; none of us succeeds often enough to boast; none of us, thanks to God's grace, fails often enough to despair. Because we do them ourselves rather than paying the State or some private charity to do them for us, there are plenty of hard times; but we do it for love, and not for money, we get much in return. There is no glamour, but there is "a new heaven and a new earth wherein justice dwells," the vision of "a Kingdom of truth and life, a Kingdom of holiness and grace, a Kingdom of justice, love and peace," the vision of the Day of the Lord when "everyone beneath her vine and fig tree shall sit, and they shall study war no longer." We are social revolutionaries, to be sure; we "hunger and thirst for justice" and we work for it too; but we know from personal experience what the Pope teaches, again in *Dives in Misericordia*: "Love conditions justice and in the final analysis, justice serves love. The primacy and the superiority of love over justice--this is a mark of the whole of revelation--are revealed precisely through mercy."



# Of Rhubarb & Rosebushes

BY KARI FISHER

October was a long month, long and really lonely. Cindy had left. Carmen and Judith were making plans to leave. Greg Jones of Kindred Community was packing to leave for Washington, D.C.

Sometimes, it seems, perhaps particularly in this lifestyle, as if there are too many goodbyes, too many faces that I fear I'll never see again.

And just as I was empathizing with my pioneer women ancestors, who must have felt uprooted as they transplanted themselves and their families, my mother called with the news that my Aunt Karen had killed herself.

It was ironic in the sense that I was planning a trip to the southern, rural part of Minnesota where my mother had grown up. Ironic that I hadn't seen that "part of my family" in two years. Ironic that it was just another goodbye I didn't have a chance to say.

My folks and my sister Ann picked me up on that early November day. Later, as we stood on the land that my mother's grandparents had at one time worked with horses, I thought about how much this was like the days our forefathers and mothers once saw--so close to the land and to our God.

Yet, there was a sense of sadness. Life is so valuable, our time so short. The aunt I had known seemed to treasure and value life so much that I could only ask, "Why, Why, Why?" And although the "why's" will probably never be completely answered; I'd like to share with you the eulogy that helped answer some questions and ease the pain of my aunt's death.

But when that blinding flash of light was triggered, Karen was not alone. For I believe God stood by her weeping as God does for all those for whom life has become too painful. God knows well the price of human suffering, be it physical or emotional, for God too died a lonely death on a cross and no one understood. It is for this reason that Christians believe that God understands . . . that God does not abandon us to our despair, but receives us in love and forgiveness.

I do not believe Karen was trying to escape God when she chose death, for she experienced the other side of life and had known its peace. She knew, as the psalmist knew, that if she were to climb to the heavens or make her bed in Sheol, God would be there. No, Karen was not able to



escape God. She was trying to escape the burdens of life that had somehow become unbearable . . . unmanageable. Her independent spirit, crushed under the belief that she was to carry all those burdens by herself, turned to death for release.

But the light of her life has not completely dimmed for we are now bearers of that light. Because God raised Christ from the dead, we believe death is not the last word . . . and thus a spark of Karen glows within each of those who knew her . . . Because Karen lived, life continues to flourish. . . .

In believing that promise, we too are enabled to reach out to one another and remember the sum total of Karen's life was greater than her death . . .

Let us never give up on singing, let us never give up on one another and let us trust that Karen flies free in the bosom of God's love.

It was through this man's words, spoken with love, that I was finally able to put all the goodbyes into perspective. If I had never met Greg, Carmen, Judith, Cindy and all the guests I've loved, how different and empty my life would be. All the sad goodbyes are not forever. Even in this life, every now and then, we see people who we'd thought we'd never see again.

Now, I feel driven by a passion to love a little more, care a little more deeply and to let go--physically only--a little more easily.

I know in an incomprehensible way that we will all be together again. And the love we will share will surpass anything we have known.

At times of sadness I feel so damn lucky to have our whole community who all shared my sorrow at my aunt's death with me and expressed kindness. Thank you all. And thanks to my friends, Elyse Weiss, Mary Jane Harrison and Marie Bloom, who said "this is why we all gotta keep on keepin' on." Many thanks also to Bill Douglas, my very, very special friend who has spent so much time with me and has been so patient through alot of my blind anger and sorrow. Especially, as I grope for answers that aren't easy.

My love goes out to my parents and sister who stood with me on the farmland where my roots were in essence planted before I was born. As we planted rhubarb and a rose bush, I realized how deep the roots are and how close God is.

Love, peace, and struggle,

Kari

## A Modern Adaption of Amos

BY FRANK CORDARO

**WOE TO THE COMPLACENT . . .**  
Lying on our water beds, our Sears orthopedic mattresses, stretched comfortably on our living room couches watching our favorite football games. Eating ourselves sick, a land where being overweight is a national health problem.

**WOE TO THE COMPLACENT . . .**  
Listening to M-TV, quadrosonic stereo blasting away in individually closed units thundering down cement highways at 55 mph. High tech, resource piggish, inefficient death traps.



**WOE TO THE COMPLACENT . . .**  
Drugs galore! The most dangerous, the most lethal, the most legal, the most profitable, the most taxable; tobacco and alcohol in unlimited varieties. A testimony to the free enterprise system.

**WOE TO THE COMPLACENT . . .**  
Abortion on demand. From the smallest, most vulnerable living being; the unborn to the largest, most fragile living thing; the planet under the bomb. A disposable society, a disposable world.

"Yet they are not made ill by the collapse of Joseph."

AMOS 6:1, 4-7



tions. The violence inherent in each of these activities is recognized. However, Christians begin to accept ever-increasing levels of violence in proportion to their acceptance of the state as a necessary, expedient human arrangement.

A number of factors conspire to reinforce this belief as the church grew in numbers it took on members from ever-higher eschelons in Roman society. These people found justification for their positions on utilitarian ground, and rationalized (sic) them with the faith. Doubting Thomas had his doubts and could set no rule. In addition, subject to sporadic persecution Christian constantly sought to prove their worth to human society and, (a subtle distinction missed) to the state. Perhaps most importantly of all Christians were confronted with the extremely persuasive promise, easily meshed with theories of benign divine providence, that Rome might one day control all of human condition.

Along with all the early church spokespersons, Tertullian, approximately 180 C.E.\*, counsels against Christian participation in war. He says, in a statement that reflects the churches dilemma, "When faith has been accepted and sealed, either the service must be left at once, as has been done by many, or else recourse must be had to all sorts of quibbling lest anything be committed against God. . . ." Tertullian also holds that only minor offices may be held by Christians. They should not be involved in criminal law. However, the depth of Tertullian's pacifism must be questioned, for as Cadoux notes he "reveled in the prospect of beholding monarchs and provincial governors (the persecutors of Christians) in the fires of hell." This is a far cry from loving and praying for ones enemies. Further, he comments that "war and not religion as the Roman cultural myth held was the means by which the empire was acquired and enlarged." Still, he is able to say, "we are always praying for all emperors that their life may be prolonged, their rule secure, their families safe, their armies secure. . . ."

Likewise, from the same period, Origen opposed to any participation in the military, argues that Christians should "strive by prayers to God on behalf of those who render military service righteously and on behalf of Him who reign righteously, that all things opposed and hostile to them . . . may be put down." Moreover, Origen believed that the empire was a providential arrangement, establishing peace and uniting the nations and so facilitating the spread of the Gospel. And that civil government was an institution ordained by God with the object

of restraining, by means of coercion and penalty, the grosser forms of human sin. (Cadoux, The Early Church and the World).

As we approach the time of Constantine, the fissure in the Christian mind becomes more pronounced. By the middle of the third century, it is not uncommon for Christians to bring lawsuits to pagan courts. Accordingly, Lactantius argues, "he is a wrongdoer who either wrongs and innocent man or spares a wrongdoer, that he may wrong many." Moreover, while he held out that it is unlawful for a just man to serve as a soldier, and that without exception it is always wrong to kill a man, he warmly congratulates Constantine on his military triumph which made him the emperor, and later eulogizes his "diligence in military matters", and relates the story of Constantine's conversion--a vision of the cross thwarting the sun (his former god) with the legend "by this you shall conquer."

The schizophrenic nature of the church just prior to Constantine is perhaps best illustrated by the case of one Christian soldier, Julius, who in 302 C.E. was beheaded for refusing to sacrifice to the Roman emperor, because it was idolatrous. Meantime, his 27 years of service and 7 military campaigns were never branded or thought of as idolatrous.

One year after Constantine's decision to make Christianity the official religion of the empire, Saint Athanasius "The great theologian to whose inflexible stand of the church was established in Trinitarian orthodoxy" declared that it was "praiseworthy to kill enemies in war." (Cadoux) By 410 C.E. things had come full circle, for it was then decreed that no non-Christian could serve in the military.

The logic is quite clear. If Christians accept the legitimacy of the state, which is not coterminous with human society, it must accept the violence upon which the state is founded and enforced as a reality. Celsus had argued as much back in the second century: if they recognized the

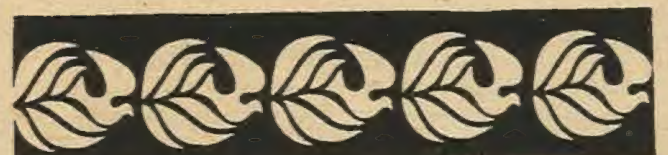
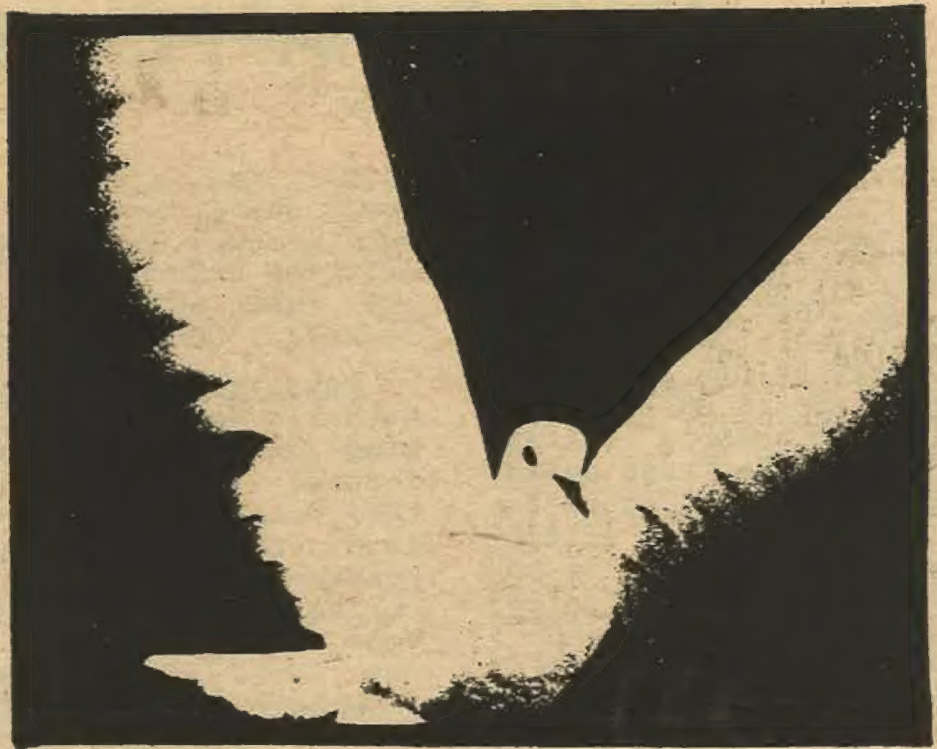
state as legitimate, Christians should either assume the full burden of citizenship or cease having children and withdraw from the world. Celsus would have his way. Eusebius formalized the schizoid church. In 313 C.E. he posited two forms of Christianity. A laity which might participate in just wars, pure marriages, procreation, and public administration: "for such men there are arranged time for the practice of discipleship and days for the hearing of the Divine Words." And a clergy requiring celibacy, poverty, aloofness from the world and a complete dedication to God. (Roland H. Bainton, Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace).

And thus the system was rationalized (sic). It all made sense: "the religion of the one God and the empire of one ruler were recognized as having been made for each other. Polytheism was a religion appropriate for a congeries of city-states perpetually in strife, but monotheism and universal monarchy were congruous, and the confession of the faith one Lord, and one baptism could now be added that of one empire and one emperor." (Bainton).

The empire is now gone. It ran its blood course, eventually withered before its enemies. They picked up its blood-stained weapons, refined them--refused them. History remains the tale of war and rumors of war but the schizoid church remains. Even worse, today Christians take up arms against one another, but the clergy bear no arms.

Thank you Dorothy for never doubting, for demanding a church in which all were called to "complete dedication to God."

\* C.E.: a less parochial way of referring to the present calendar, a substitute for A.D.





# WHAT'S HAPPENING

BY KARI FISHER

It's hard to know where to start this article, especially since I'm very involved with the Jets-Dolphin game.

Catherine Lin Bobbitt at age three months has declared herself a Minnesota Vikings fan. She has also been awarded the Guinness' record for being the baby most held by different people. It is absolutely amazing the smiles she brings from people. She's even started smiling herself--she likes bananas. We would also like to comment on her amazing resemblance to a "baby doll".



Luke Bobbitt is still involved with going half days to day care (although he says that I'm supposed to say Tiny Tots because he doesn't go to day care anymore). Luke recovered well from his foot burns. Thanks for your prayers. Luke is a consistent volunteer for dishes, but where did the step ladder go? Luke is also a Vikings fan.

Wendy Bobbitt is wondering how she has two Viking fans for children. Wendy and Patti were on the panel for the Homeless forum. Between Lazarus House and Kindred House, Wendy still finds time to drink a cup of coffee (when we have it--subtle, hint, hint, hint). Right now, she's leading the turkey drive for folks in the neighborhood.

Jim Harrington is the ring-leader of the notorious A.B.C.'s (Ajax Broadcasting Company's) first morning recording. Along with other members and "friends" of the community, Jim recorded a lovely rendition of "Wake Up with the Buttercups" and the ever-so-sweet "On the Good Ship Lollipop". For a mere \$5.95, you too can experience the joy of hearing it. Although I'm not sure it will be as lovely as the version I heard at 6:45 a.m.. (Argh! I'm not a morning person.) Jim and Carmen also spent their "free" time roofing the Habitat House for a month.

Donna Henderson attended a civil rights litigation seminar in October. She continues to be busy with Legal Aid doing a variety of things. In case you haven't been to mass lately; Donna is there with

guitar and singing. Right now, she's tearing her hair out because since Cindy Blake left the community in October, she must edit Via Pacis by herself. No small task.

Patti McKee is another busy Catholic Worker. Besides working on the Non-Violence Conference, she's been busy with the Coalition for the Homeless, the free food store and Lazarus House. Yet another "broadcast" star, she has also been doing alot of crocheting for Catie and Kate McKenna's (formerly of Kindred House) soon-to-be twins.

Judith Reeh--Well, it's tough. How do you say "auf wiedersehen" (I don't know how to say it no less spell it) to someone who has taught you so much? Someone who, on one of her first nights here, participated in a pot 'n pan rock 'n roll band and got hit in the head with a flying kettle? The life a Catholic Worker is not without its hazards. How does anyone thank someone for sitting through a two hour poetry reading that was in another language? Or trying to teach someone how to knit in "German" style. (I still have the yarn.) We've all known that sooner or later Judith's time with us would end; but maybe not this soon. (C'mon, let's get that bridge finished--the one that starts in New York.)



Norman Searah--The man is in his prime. His project of collecting Christmas presents for everyone has less than a month left. Once Christmas is here, Norman will take a break for a half day before he starts collecting presents again. Our friend Emma Goldman, the cat, is back and her favorite hang out is inside the bib of Norman's overalls.



Carmen Trotta--We're going to miss Carmen. Even if he isn't a Vikings fan. When Carmen hasn't been roofing or trying to write his Via Pacis article (ahem), he's been working on his espanol. (Bet you didn't know I was bilingual.) Well, the next community road trip is rumored to be to Long Island to see Judith and Carmen. Seriously though, hasta luego!



Marla Wells--We popped the question and now Marla is a member of our community. Marla is living at her house, which is a refuge for Catholic Workers. An added benefit is her husband Glenn "Duck" Wells who stops in to visit us all. Please keep Glenn's mom in your prayers--she's in the hospital after having had two heart attacks.



Well, I'm Kari Fisher and I'm writing this epistle. I realize I left you on the edge of your seats about my trip to New York. It was great; other than not having a place to stay when I got to New York; taking the subway for the first time and getting lost on Greenwich Village at 11:00 p.m. on a Friday night. (Other than that Mrs. Lincoln, now where was the place?) The New York Catholic Worker (yes, the mother house) kindly took me in for a week and Marian, a worker there, showed me the sights, including the local pizza shop.

Despite the past two months being long, they've been great. I feel uplifted by the A.B.C. broadcasts, babies and the love of the community. You're all great!



# A Plea for Help from the Christmas Hippie

by Norman Searah

It's snowing outside and Thanksgiving isn't here yet, but I'm still wrapping Christmas gifts, or should I say things that others can use. Yet, I find that I haven't got enough things to wrap up, or should I say that I need more Christmas gifts to give people who wouldn't be getting gifts.



So I need:  
mens socks  
shavers  
stocking caps  
gloves  
stuffed animals  
shampoo  
toothpaste  
tooth brushes  
old jewelry  
samplers  
games for teenagers  
(with all their  
pieces please)  
playing cards  
chess games  
checkers games  
sewing kits

or whatever you may wish to give.

I'm also begging for blankets for people that might be living in empty houses, perhaps like the one down the street or the one I pass by alot where there's no heat. Sometimes no matter what one does to get warm when there's

no heat in the winter, it effects them alot. Either they end up dead or end up in the hospital for frost bitten limbs or just sick or burns from trying to start a fire to get warm and end up burning the house down. The same for the people next door who have just had their heat turned off because they could not pay the heat bill for that month. So I'm begging for blankets to keep people from freezing. And for Christmas gifts to cheer people up.

I know I'm asking too much. If you know people that are living in empty houses, who are living in hallways or alleyway, or who even had their heat turned off and don't know how to help, write me a letter or call letting me know where they are, please.

Thank you,  
Norman Searah

## Nicaraguans Respond to Registration Resisters

In our last issue we reported on the actions of Wayne Zebelman and Michael Wehle who, in response to the Senate's approval to Contra Aid, notified the Selective Service System of their refusal to register for the military draft. Wehle and Zebelman have since received three letters. One from the Selective Service System suggesting they register and two from representatives of the people of Nicaragua. Copies of the letters from the representatives are below.

EMBAJADA DE NICARAGUA  
WASHINGTON D C

October 1, 1986

Mr. Michael Wehle  
Mr. Wayne Zebelman  
227 North Thomas Street  
Olympia, WA 98502



MINISTERIO  
DEL  
EXTERIOR  
Managua, Nic.

October 7, 1986.

Dear Mr. Wehle and Mr. Zebelman,

Thank you very much for your letter of August 30, 1986 and for the sending me a copy of the letter that you send to the Director of the Selective Service System, General Thomas K. Turnage. I have read carefully your very well documented and courageous letter and I commend you for your action.

I, as well as the Nicaraguans who have learned about your action, are very moved by your straightforwardness, sincerity and courage. The fact that young Americans like you are opposed to the policies of the Reagan Administration and dare to speak out publicly against these policies and even act against them, is very encouraging. If those who feel strongly let what is best in them come forth, then good will prevail over the evil of the policies because others will follow who may feel the same way but lack the courage. You must call others to join you.

The Nicaraguan people have great respect and admiration for the American people who have come to their defense and aid. They feel that when they decide to take a stand against their own government, that they can reverse the ill-advised policies.

I am sending a copy of your letter to Nicaragua so that the people there may know of it and take courage from it. We sense that, perhaps realizing the posture of the powers that be against Nicaragua at present, many Americans are beginning to take stand and to separe out.

Again, let me thank you for your support and your solidarity. I wish you all the very best in everything that you do.

Sincerely yours,

CARLOS TUNNEMANN  
Ambassador

Mr. Michael Wehle  
227 N. Thomas St.  
Olympia, WA 98502

Mr. Wayne Zebelman  
1320 E. 8th Ave.  
Olympia, WA 98501

Dear friends:

Thank you for your letter of August 30, 1986, with the enclosed copy of your letter to the Director of the U.S. Selective Service System.

The demonstrations of protest by the United States people denouncing the brutal and illegal war of aggression imposed on Nicaragua is the best tribute that can be offered to those who have sacrificed their lives in the defense of our country.

We hope that your act of resistance will multiply by the thousands until the entire people of the United States becomes one huge voice demanding peace and justice for Nicaragua and Central American.

Sincerely,

JAVIER CHAMORRO MORA  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Foreign Relations.

For more information on these men's resistance efforts, please write:

Wayne Zebelman  
1320 East 8th Avenue  
Olympia, Washington  
98501



Via Pacific  
MAIL--/Missouri of Des Moines  
Box 4551--Box 1816  
Des Moines, IA 50306  
515-243-0765

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